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COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

Twenty-fourth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 630th MEETING

Held at the Palais Wilson, Geneva,
on Wednesday, 24 May at 3 p.m.

Chairperson: Ms. OUEDRAOGO

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GE.00-42484 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

CONSIDERATION OF REPORTS OF STATES PARTIES (agenda item 4) (continued)

Initial report of Cambodia (continued) (CRC/C/11/Add.16; CRC/C/Q/CAM/1; written replies of the Government of Cambodia to the questions raised in the list of issues (document without a symbol distributed in the meeting room in English only))

1. At the invitation of the Chairperson, the delegation of Cambodia resumed places at the Committee table.

2. The CHAIRPERSON invited the members of the Committee to ask questions concerning family environment and alternative care, basic health and welfare and education, leisure and cultural activities.

3. Ms. TIGERSTEDT-TÄHTELÄ said that the delegation had acknowledged a few isolated cases of police brutality but stated that such conduct was not sanctioned by the Royal Government of Cambodia. Should the Royal Government not assume responsibility for the actions of the police, and of the prison and other authorities?

4. Detailed information had been provided on health plans and strategies. She wondered, however, whether the 38 per cent of the population living below the poverty line had access to health services, considering the prohibitive costs of health care and treatment. She would like to know whether free health care for the poor was being envisaged by the Royal Government.

5. Mr. RABAH said the Committee had been informed that child-care institutions were run either by the Royal Government or by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). He would like additional information on how those institutions were managed and on cooperation between the Royal Government and NGOs in that regard. He also wondered about the plight of children who were not placed in those institutions.

6. He would welcome additional information on foster care. Were there obstacles to the enactment of legislation that would regulate foster care institutions in the best interests of children?

7. Ms. MOKHUANE said that, according to certain sources, inspections of alternative care facilities were not conducted regularly. She would appreciate information about the mechanisms used by the Royal Government to ensure the regular monitoring of alternative care, including the functioning of reporting relationships.

8. Mr. DOEK said he would appreciate additional information about intercountry adoption and asked whether Cambodia was considering ratifying the Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Cooperation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption. According to the initial report of Cambodia (CRC/C/11/Add.16), very few children were adopted by Cambodian citizens. However, informal adoption appeared to take place; he wondered how many children it affected and whether informal adoptions were monitored by the Royal Government. Was the Royal Government envisaging more effective regulation in that regard, in the best interests of children?

9. According to the report corporal punishment in families was widespread in Cambodia. He wondered whether the Royal Government intended to conduct a study of child abuse and neglect at the family level, especially as neglect was closely linked to child abandonment. Did the Royal Government plan to educate parents about physical violence committed against children or to prohibit corporal punishment?

10. Ms. RILANTONO said that she was puzzled about the rising infant mortality rates, as the Royal Government had carried out a successful poliomyelitis immunization programme. She wondered whether vaccines were imported and whether assistance had been extended by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) or the World Health Organization (WHO) in acquiring them. Noting that the incidence of acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) was rising, she asked for further information on the two-year strategic plan implemented by the National HIV Centre and asked whether it included drug-abuse cases. She also inquired as to the care offered to children of HIV-positive parents with regard to the risk of transmission.

The meeting was suspended at 3.15 p.m. and resumed at 3.25 p.m.

11. Ms. HARANVADDEY (Cambodia) reiterated that the Royal Government did not sanction police brutality. The Australian Embassy in Cambodia was helping to train police officers in order to strengthen their capacity to protect children against violence and ensure that children's rights were respected. In addition, the Ministry of the Interior had signed an agreement with international bodies, including UNICEF, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), on child protection and the training of the police in children's rights issues.

12. The Penal Department of the Ministry of the Interior was examining a possible mechanism for protecting children's rights. It would shortly set up a unit specialized in protecting children against exploitation, in keeping with recommendations contained in the Five-Year Plan of Action against Sexual Exploitation of Children developed as a follow-up to the Stockholm Congress. The Cambodian National Council for Children (CNCE) and UNICEF were working together with the Ministry of the Interior to establish a bureau for the protection of children's rights which was expected to begin operating in 2000.

13. Turning to health, she said that the Royal Government recognized the inadequacy of health services at the community level. The problem related more to the difficulty in renewing supplies of medicines than to lack of staff. Consequently, the Royal Government focused on developing capacity-building plans and strategies. The Swiss Government, with the support of NGOs, had built a large hospital which provided services for the poor.

14. Replying to Mr. Rabah, she said that in the case of child-care institutions run jointly by the Royal Government and NGOs, staff and funding were provided by the Royal Government. As its contribution amounted to only about $10 per month, however, additional assistance by NGOs was necessary. Institutions managed solely by NGOs were staffed and funded by those NGOs. In some cases, inter-NGO efforts were assisted by the Royal Government.

15. Foster care was not regulated. NGO-run institutions reported to the Child Welfare Department of the Ministry of Social Welfare every three months, and provincial inspectorates also reported to the Child Welfare Department. The Child-care Bureau of the Child Welfare Department was responsible for monitoring all institutions.

16. Far more intercountry adoptions took place than domestic ones because foreigners were more willing than Cambodians to adopt disabled or even HIV-positive children and better able to finance their treatment. There was no adoption legislation, but a temporary procedure existed. Home studies were carried out of prospective adoptive parents, who must comply with certain conditions relating, for example, to income and good health. The Child-care Bureau reviewed the documents before transmitting them to the Ministry of Social Welfare, which also relied on input from institutions and municipal authorities. Cambodian officials subsequently visited adopted children in the foreign country to ensure that all conditions were met. No study of corporal punishment had been conducted.

17. Mr. SETHY (Cambodia) said that improvements had been introduced in the health sector, including a public sanitation project, but that efforts had been limited by budgetary constraints. Free health care was offered in rural areas, but despite assistance provided by foreign Governments and NGOs the replenishing of drug supplies was a persistent problem.

18. Domestic violence was not a major problem in Cambodia, although it did exist. The Royal Government had tried to raise the population's awareness of the problem through radio and television campaigns.

19. An extensive vaccination programme targeting six diseases had covered over 70 per cent of the country's children. It was true that the campaign against poliomyelitis had been successful, but in general the Royal Government relied heavily on outside help to import vaccines.

20. Campaigns on AIDS prevention and the use of contraceptives had been conducted throughout the country with the result that the public was much better informed than before in that regard. With regard to AIDS prevention education, an inter-ministerial commission had been formed covering all levels of the education system, including schools located in remote areas, and reproductive health had been introduced into the school curricula. Teachers had also been trained in AIDS prevention and teenagers had been made a priority group for attention.

21. Drug abuse, especially intravenous drug use, did not constitute a major problem in Cambodia, but it was necessary to raise public awareness in that regard. A programme had been launched for the protection of the children of HIV-positive mothers.

22. The CHAIRPERSON invited the Committee members to ask questions concerning special protection measures.

23. Ms. MOKHUANE said knowledge about contraceptives was commendable, but it was even more important for behaviour to match that knowledge. She wondered whether studies had been carried out on the use of contraceptives by young people. The Royal Government stated that access to health services had improved, but she wondered about quality of services and how

many people actually made use of them. By way of illustration, it had been indicated that breastfeeding started at a late stage during infancy and was coupled with food which was detrimental to human health. There were also many cases of preventable diseases, disabilities and a high maternal mortality rate in Cambodia.

24. Because of the shortage of medicaments, people resorted to traditional medicine, and she wondered whether any exchange of views had taken place between health officials and traditional healers. With regard to environmental health, only 19 per cent of the population had access to proper sanitation; and she asked whether there were any plans to improve that situation. The Committee had received information which contradicted the Royal Government's claim that alcohol abuse was not a major problem in Cambodia and which indicated that drug use was on the increase. The Royal Government had said a plan was in place to combat drug trafficking, but was that plan implemented?

25. Mr. DOEK said that he was disappointed at the description of primary education in the Royal Government's written replies. The high drop-out rates in grades 1 to 3 meant that some 500,000 school-age children were not attending school. Scant progress appeared to have been made since 1994. Education must be assigned high priority in any country, despite financial and economic limitations. The Royal Government acknowledged the problem, but appeared to have given up hope because of lack of funds. He would like to know what progress the delegation considered the country to have achieved in the previous five years. What was the Royal Government actually doing to attain the numerous educational goals set forth in paragraph 195 of the country's initial report? Had consideration been given to a loan from the World Bank or another financial institution?

26. Was there any existing or planned mechanism for optimizing the effectiveness of the many international organizations working in Cambodia, which, according to the report, posed problems of regulation by failing to inform the authorities of the renewal of their mandates?

27. Citing an October 1999 report on child rape in Cambodia and a report on sexual exploitation of children he asked the delegation to comment on those phenomena. An important goal of any governmental action was to determine, with help from other orgaizations, the role of the judiciary and law-enforcement agencies. In Cambodia the latter were allegedly insensitive, untrained and ignorant of how such cases should be handled. Members of the judiciary were reportedly open to bribes for settling cases out of court. If that was so, what action was the Royal Government taking to improve the quality of both the judiciary and law-enforcement agencies?

28. Mr. FULCI asked what legislative and other measures the Royal Government was taking to achieve the difficult task of demobilizing and reintegrating the large number of children who had been child combatants and what impact those measures were having. He also asked the delegation to comment on the claim made in an NGO report that children aged 7-17 were re-educated at the Youth Rehabilitation Centre in Phnom Penh, the implication being that 7 was the age of criminal responsibility. UNICEF had reported cases of children detained in adult prisons in Phnom Penh and Battambang, without medical services and with no reintegration programme for them on release. It appeared that many of them had not even been convicted. He would appreciate details about Cambodia's efforts to comply with articles 37, 39 and 40 of

the Convention and on its measures to protect working children and reduce child labour in Cambodia. What relations did it maintain with ILO in connection with child labour? Did it envisage ratification of the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)?

29. Despite the serious problem of sexual exploitation of children in Cambodia, no study had been undertaken on the subject. The Royal Government appeared to oscillate between tolerance and prohibition. What was its actual position? What action were the authorities taking to protect children against the scourge of abduction into networks of exploitation?

30. Ms. TIGERSTEDT-TÄHTELÄ noted the delegation's statement that child abuse did not pose a problem in the country, despite reports that corporal punishment in the home was widespread. While there had been no survey on child abuse as such, in 1996 one NGO had conducted a survey on violence against women, which also affected children. Unfortunately, only adults had been polled, but the abused women had reported that their spouses frequently attacked the children after a fight. The authorities should make a point of interviewing children so that their experiences could be used as the basis for media-awareness campaigns. Reporting of offences by neighbours or spouses should also be encouraged, not necessarily with a view to imprisoning the offender but for the protection of the family as a whole.

31. The report painted a very negative picture of the educational situation in the country, highlighting budget constraints, poor education delivery and the widening gap between urban and rural schools. Although the Royal Government had established new policies for reform and was working to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of education sector planning, the high drop-out rate suggested that the schooling on offer did not hold pupils' interest. Attempts might be made to integrate older children (aged 12-18) into curriculum planning in order to discover the type of education they wished to receive, and to seek input from teachers, relevant NGOs and others with ideas about education.

32. Ms. RILANTONO acknowledged that with only 8 per cent of the total budget allocated to education, it was difficult to assign due importance to human resource development, which was a major aspect of any country's development. Educational coverage needed to be provided from the earliest possible age and should include compulsory primary and secondary education. Were scholarships for secondary education awarded by intergovernmental or non-governmental institutions? As the report focused on non-formal education for adults, she wondered whether there were any non-formal modules available to children who dropped out of school and needed to work for a few hours each day. She recommended that such education should be provided for children at the primary and lower secondary levels.

33. She requested an explanation of the disparity between the performance levels of boys and girls, who appeared to fall behind after the age of 10. Was that due to parental attitudes? Of what real assistance had the Education Management Information System been in reforming education policy?

34. Ms. MOKHUANE said that, while she appreciated the candid reply to question 16, she was dismayed at the Royal Government's abdication of responsibility for leisure activities. Given the general level of poverty in the country, did the delegation not consider it impractical for the community to be asked to finance leisure activities from its own pocket?

35. The reply to question 12 stated that there was no new legislation governing parental responsibilities for a child's upbringing and development. As family violence affected relationships at all levels, she hoped the authorities would promptly consider ways to promote an atmosphere of happiness within the family, as described in the preamble to the Convention.

36. Mr. RABAH asked whether the very high numbers of drop-outs and repeaters, most of them girls, and the low levels of education provided could be attributed solely to the country's dearth of teachers. Perhaps teachers' limited skills were also a factor. It had been recommended that teachers' salaries should be increased to US$ 100 per month, which was still a very low figure. He urged the Royal Government to deploy greater efforts to eradicate corruption in schools, erect more school buildings and provide more materials and services.

37. He was disturbed at the absence of a law governing the juvenile justice system and the lack of specialized judges. He asked whether legal aid was available to minors at police stations or in the courts, what exactly occurred at the Youth Rehabilitation Centre in Phnom Penh and whether the Centre was served by trained judicial officers. As UNICEF and other United Nations agencies were in a position to assist with funding, financial constraints need not be a deterrent.

38. The CHAIRPERSON expressed surprise that, although Cambodia had been represented at the World Education Forum in Dakar, education was still not compulsory. Was that due to a funding problem? Many developing countries were in a similar situation, yet succeeded in maintaining a level of compulsory education, even if it did not extend to all children.

The meeting was suspended at 4.30 p.m. and resumed at 4.40 p.m.

39. Mr. PHEARITH (Cambodia) said that while there was as yet no law governing the juvenile justice system, the authorities were endeavouring to establish a procedure to deal with child offenders. A committee was being established to oversee the child's interrogation by police. Composed of parents, teachers, a judge, local authorities and representatives of relevant NGOs, it would decide what action was in the child's best interests. While the Youth Rehabilitation Centre in Phnom Penh had been used in the past as a detention centre, it had now become a rehabilitation centre. The authorities were cooperating by providing legal aid, and judges were being trained in trial procedures for cases involving children.

40. With the assistance of UNICEF, the National Committee on Demobilization was arranging training for the approximately 300 child victims of armed conflict in Cambodia. With the assistance of the Australian Government, the authorities were arranging for the separation of young offenders from adults in Phnom Penh, and the prisons were visited once or twice a week. Fund-raising was in progress to provide similar facilities in the provinces, such as Battambang.

With ILO support, a subcommittee of the Cambodian National Committee for Children (CNCE) was organizing training for provincial labour inspectors. Leaflets and manuals had been disseminated in order to raise public awareness of the child-labour problem, and measures were in place to integrate child workers into the education system.

41. Mr. SETHY (Cambodia) said that traditional medicine was an important part of Cambodia's heritage and that there was a special department within the Ministry of Health responsible for promoting it.

42. Implementing the right to education was a long-term undertaking in any country, but particularly in Cambodia, where more than 90 per cent of schools had been destroyed and more than 80 per cent of teachers massacred under the Khmer Rouge regime. Most of the few remaining school buildings had been used by the Khmer Rouge to store weapons or as sites for carrying out torture. Subsequent Governments had therefore had to rebuild the education system from scratch. People who could themselves barely read or write had volunteered as teachers, and efforts had been made to give them adequate training. Since that time, the number of teachers had increased significantly and 18 teacher-training centres had been set up in different provinces.

43. There were currently more than 2.3 million pupils and students in the education system overall, which was a substantial proportion of the total population of 11 million. However, the Government acknowledged that much remained to be done: not all children were enrolled in school and many schools needed to be rebuilt, which would require substantial funds. The ultimate aim was to provide access to school for all children.

44. The Government was currently conducting a comprehensive review of education policy. Various organizations such as UNICEF and the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) had already made a significant contribution to the task of restoring the education system, and he agreed with the Committee's view that it was important to maintain contact with such donors. The Asian Development Bank had also provided loans to help with, for example, the printing and distribution of schoolbooks, and aid had been received from the European Union (EU) to set up teacher-training centres. Funds from the World Bank were being concentrated on primary education. Work was under way to group scattered individual classes into proper schools and to involve parents and the community in general in the education process.

45. High drop-out and repetition rates constituted a waste of resources, particularly for poor countries like Cambodia, and discussions were currently under way, with the participation of relevant experts, to reform the curriculum. After participating in the World Education Forum held in Dakar in April 2000, Cambodia was determined to develop its own action plan for education. An Education Management Information System (EMIS) centre had been set up, which collected and analysed data on education. The Government used that data to enable it to provide for the educational needs of the community in the most effective way possible. One of the causes of high repetition and drop-out rates was the low level of motivation among teachers. The Government had recently granted bonuses to some teachers, and their basic salary was double that of civil servants; nonetheless, teachers' salaries were still inadequate. That was one of the issues to be discussed with Cambodia's donors.

46. Only a small percentage of children were enrolled in pre-school education. However, Cambodia recognized its importance and had already set up joint projects in that field with donors such as the United Nations Scientific, Educational and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and UNICEF.

47. Although the right to free education for all for nine years was enshrined in the Constitution, it was true that there was no legislation specifying that education was compulsory. That was because, when the Constitution had been adopted in 1993, the Khmer Rouge had still been in control of some areas of the country, and also because the lack of resources would have made it impossible to implement such a commitment. Since 1993, therefore, the State had done its utmost to achieve the ultimate goal of free education for all, but it was clear that there was still a long way to go.

48. Ms. HARANVADDEY (Cambodia) said that no statistics were available on the extent of sexual exploitation of children; however, the Government recognized that it was a serious problem. A survey conducted by the CNCE in 1998 had found that there was no clear mechanism for addressing it in the provinces. However, the Government had recently adopted a five-year plan to combat the sexual exploitation of children, consisting of four programmes aimed at prevention, protection, recovery and reintegration. Each programme contained objectives, strategies and activities and specified the institution responsible for each activity and the resources available from the Government and NGOs. The Government had urged State bodies, parents and the general public to participate in implementing the plan and had recommended that the CNCE should set up a subcommittee to promote and monitor implementation. The plan was ambitious and wide-ranging, and the support of the international community would be required in order for it to be implemented effectively. One of the aims of the plan was to provide training for police officers, judges and civil servants on the law regarding sexual exploitation of children and the procedure for dealing with reports of such exploitation. The Ministry of Social Affairs played a major role in rehabilitating victims and reintegrating them into society. Cambodia cooperated with other countries on the issue, although it had not signed any formal bilateral agreements. Cooperation with other countries was also under way to combat sex tourism involving children. The Ministry of Tourism was developing a strategy to deal with that problem and was working to raise awareness of it among the owners of establishments such as hotels, restaurants and discotheques.

49. Adult illiteracy was a major problem and literacy campaigns formed part of the strategy of providing education for all. Pilot projects had also been set up to provide non-formal education and practical skills training. A committee consisting of representatives of several ministries had been established to liaise with committees at the grass-roots level in order to implement the various campaigns and projects.

50. Sex education and the use of condoms were not easy issues to address, as many people, particularly the older generation, found it difficult to discuss such matters. However, sex education, including teaching on HIV/AIDS, was being introduced into the curriculum and the subject was included in teacher-training programmes. It was important to promote awareness of

sexual health issues among adults as well as children. To that end, posters had been put up around the country; given that a large proportion of the population was illiterate, posters were considered to be one of the most effective ways of raising awareness.

51. Mr. DOEK reiterated his question about the roles of the judiciary and law enforcement agencies in addressing cases of sexual exploitation, rape and prostitution. According to one report, 11 police officers, in addition to civil servants and other Government employees, had been accused of rape in 1998. None of their cases had been brought to trial, although some had led to out-of-court settlements, certain of which had reportedly involved arranged marriages between the rapists and their victims. Perhaps the members of the judiciary required instruction in the handling of such cases. In addition, the salaries of judges should be raised to ensure a decent standard of living and reduce their vulnerability to corruption.

52. In 1997, a subcommission for child labour had been established, yet a recent study by the ILO International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) had found that approximately 500,000 Cambodian children between the ages of 5 and 17 were still working. A few pilot programmes against child labour had been launched in 1996 or 1997; had thy been expanded? What had been done in conjunction with IPEC to prevent children from entering the work force and to reintegrate those who already had done so into the education system?

53. Ms. TIGERSTEDT-TÄHTELÄ said that the CNCE apparently played a coordinating and monitoring role, while the actual implementation of the Convention was left to the various government ministries. The Government had stated in the written replies that the CNCE needed to strengthen its capacity and that it required technical assistance and financial support from various countries and international organizations. Was the Government planning to transform the CNCE from an advisory body into an executive one?

The meeting was suspended at 5.30 p.m. and resumed at 5.35 p.m.

54. Mr. PHEARITH (Cambodia) said that a law against the sexual exploitation of women and children existed, and in certain cases had been enforced very effectively. Sentences of up to 15 years' imprisonment had been handed down for the rape of minors or for sex trafficking. The judiciary, which was considered by the international community as particularly weak, was currently undergoing an extensive reform. With the assistance of an international agency the Ministry of the Interior had established a special unit to combat sex trafficking of minors. A number of NGOs were working against child labour, and some had submitted a plan of action to the subcommission for child labour. The Government would allocate resources to NGOs for the implementation of that plan of action, which was to include a media campaign, press conferences and assistance for vulnerable children.

55. Ms. HARANVADDEY said that the CNCE was a national body for the coordination, monitoring and evaluation of programmes for children, which also undertook advocacy campaigns. It required an adequate budget to ensure implementation of the Convention by the various ministries. For example, when the Plan of Action against Sexual Exploitation of

Children had been drawn up, the ministries concerned had requested funding from the CNCE for its implementation. Resources had been required to establish the subcommission for child labour and for the training which the CNCE provided for staff in the relevant ministries and for its own staff. Staff attended seminars in Cambodia and overseas to learn how to monitor implementation of the law and how to collect and process data. The CNCE was not simply a monitoring and advisory body; it was deeply involved in the formulated and implementation of government policy in its field.

56. The CHAIRPERSON invited Ms. Tigerstedt-Tähtelä, the Country Rapporteur, to present preliminary observations on the discussions with the delegation of Cambodia.

57. Ms. TIGERSTEDT-TÄHTELÄ (Country Rapporteur) thanked the delegation for engaging in a constructive dialogue in a spirit of cooperation. The Committee was aware of the country's history, the atrocities which it had experienced and its current lack of financial and human resources. As the delegation had stated, Cambodia had very nearly had to start from scratch in many areas.

58. Implementation of the Convention was a political issue, and one which deserved the highest priority; the State budget should perhaps be reallocated better to reflect that priority. While NGOs and the international community could assist, responsibility ultimately lay with the Royal Government.

59. Cambodia had acceded to the six major international human rights instruments; it had incorporated into the Constitution the rights enshrined in the Convention and it had concluded a Memorandum of Understanding with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). It had also recently ratified the ILO Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and was considering ratification of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182). The Committee would no doubt recommend that existing laws should be reviewed to ensure that they were in conformity with the provisions of the Convention, in particular in respect of birth registration, family matters, alternative care and juvenile justice. The country's data collection system needed to be strengthened. The Government should take steps to ensure that all rights were enjoyed by all children, without any discrimination. It should promote children's participation in the family, school, institutions and the local administrations, and should recognize children's rights to freedom of expression and association. Complaints of child abuse should be dealt with swiftly and effectively by law enforcement agencies and the judiciary through the establishment of procedures accessible to children, so as to avoid offenders going unpunished. A juvenile justice system must be established. The Government should also develop regulations for institutions and other forms of alternative care. Children with disabilities should be integrated into the school system and should be given support, and the social services for the rehabilitation of victims of child abuse and exploitation should be strengthened and expanded. The Royal Government should enforce the provisions of the labour law concerning the minimum age for employment and should train labour inspectors and provide them with the means to monitor child labour.

60. Mr. SETHY (Cambodia) said that the Royal Government had taken note of the recommendations made by the Committee. His delegation expressed its gratitude to UNICEF for its logistic and financial support, which had permitted two of its members to take part in the Committee's meetings.

61. The CHAIRPERSON said that it was important to coordinate the activities of the hundreds of NGOs and foreign institutions which were currently working in Cambodia. She encouraged the Royal Government to consider the establishment of an ombudsman for human rights and to reformulate the education policy with the participation not only of the population, but of children in particular, especially with regard to the methods used. While the Royal Government's recognition of the problem of sexual exploitation was commendable, it still must adopt legislation defining the age of consent for sexual relations, which would no doubt prove useful in giving effect to the child protection programmes it had adopted. She also called on the delegation to ensure that the report and the Committee's concluding observations concerning Cambodia would be disseminated throughout the country.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.